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E L Y & C O M P A N Y , I N C .

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*Financial Institutions and
Monetary Policy Consulting*

Deposit Insurance and
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Public Policy Analyses
Strategic Planning

September 15, 2006

Mailing Address:
Post Office Box 21010
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**Mr. Ernest E. Allen
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
699 Prince Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314**

Dear Mr. Allen:

As an Old Town resident, I have great pride in the fact that the Center is a neighbor -- the Center is so well know nationally, and even internationally -- that it is a great credit to the City of Alexandria. The Center also has done an excellent job of upgrading and maintaining its building -- something I observe every day as I walk up Prince Street, on my way to work, to get my mail at the George Mason Station of the USPS, for as you will notice above, I am a boxholder at the George Mason Station.

Like the other 22320 boxholders, I am most concerned about where the Station will be relocated when its lease expires next March 31. We very much want the Station to remain in downtown Alexandria, as close to its present location as possible. Perhaps the Postal Service has not moved as quickly as it should in finding new space for the George Mason Station, but it is moving. However, due to its complex procurement regulations, it may not be possible for the Postal Service to find and remodel a good new location for the Station by next March 31 -- it may need a few more months. Therefore, I encourage the Center to work with the Postal Service, to cut it a little slack, if you will, and be prepared to extend the lease on the present George Mason Station for a few months, if the Postal Service needs that additional time to relocate a most important postal facility, at least to those who use it every day.

I am writing only on my behalf, but I am confident that most other users of the George Mason Station -- its boxholders and other customers -- will appreciate this gesture. In a small way, it will bring even more credit to the Center.

Very truly yours,



Bert Ely

cc: The Mayor and Members of the Alexandria City Council

E L Y & C O M P A N Y , I N C .

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September 7, 2006

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Mr. William Ridenour
Alexandria Postmaster
United States Postal Service
1100 Wythe Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-9998

Dear Mr. Ridenour:

I am writing to follow up on my September 2 letter to you (a copy is enclosed) regarding the removal of mail-collection boxes in Old Town Alexandria, as well as elsewhere in the City of Alexandria.

On Tuesday, I spoke with Mr. Kenney Miles, who I understand is doing much of the leg-work in determining which collection boxes are candidates for removal. He was very helpful in explaining this process to me and gave me the citation for the postal regulations (POM Sec. 315.32, 315.33, and 315.4) governing the location, removal, and relocation of mail-collection boxes. I was particularly struck by Sec. 315.4, which provides that a removal/relocation review will be conducted "if a box generates fewer than 25 pieces [of mail] a day." Presumably, a box should not be removed or relocated if more than 25 pieces a day are deposited in it.

With that 25-pieces-a-day number in mind, yesterday and the day before yesterday (September 6 and 5) I observed, from a distance, the amount of mail pulled, during the second (and last) collection of the day, from the two collection boxes in front of 803 King Street and the third (and last) collection of the day from the two boxes in front of 900 King Street. According to notices pasted on these boxes, both boxes at 803 King are slated for removal as well as one of the two boxes at 900 King Street.


Although I stood a few feet away, on a public sidewalk, from the collection boxes as they were emptied, clearly there were more than 25 letters pulled from each box in front of 803 King -- perhaps 50 to 100 pieces from each box on Tuesday and a somewhat lesser number from each box (but definitely more than 25 pieces) yesterday. Almost certainly, additional mail was collected in the earlier collection that day. While arguably there do not have to be two boxes in front of 803 King, there is far more than enough mail deposited at that location to justify the retention of one box at that location.

As I fully expected, as a long-time depositor of mail in the boxes at 900 King Street just before the last collection of the day, far more mail was pulled from the two boxes at that location. On Tuesday, the equivalent of approximately two USPS tote bins was pulled from the two boxes; a portion of the mail was in a tote bin placed under one of the boxes. Yesterday, the mail volume was somewhat less -- perhaps one tote bin. I am sure you will agree with me that a USPS tote bin holds far, far more than 25 pieces of mail -- perhaps several hundred pieces. Perhaps the boxes in front of 900 King Street can be replaced with one jumbo-size collection box, but pulling one box while leaving the other one will increase significantly the number of days when the box is so stuffed that mail cannot even be put into the box. Surely you do not want that to happen.

Given the potential controversy that will arise when the USPS begins pulling collection boxes throughout the City of Alexandria, I would be most appreciative if you would send me a list of all the box locations which are candidates for removal. I and other Alexandria residents and businesses may be able identify some boxes which should not, upon further consideration, be removed.

Please contact me, at 703-836-4101, if there is any aspect of this letter that you would like to discuss.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bert Ely". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent "B" and "E".

Bert Ely

cc: Mr. Michael S. Furey, Northern Virginia District Manager,
United States Postal Service
✓ The Mayor and members of the Alexandria City Council
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
Old Town Civic Association